



MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL CENTER



MARKETING YOUR FAMILY CHILD CARE SERVICES

The **BEST** advertising is **free word-of-mouth information** about you and your program. When you conduct your child care business in a professional manner and you provide **high quality care** for children, the word will quickly spread. However, to get started you need to do some advertising. Below are some advertising marketing methods that can help you attract parents who need child care services.

- ♦ **LOCATE:** Child Care is a referral line at your local Child Care Resource and Referral Center. Check with LOCATE regularly to update data base information on your family child care home. **240-777-3130**
- ♦ **Classified Advertisements:** These can be placed in local newsletters and newspapers and Penny Savers.

The Gazette **301-670-2565 or 301-670-2500**
Distributed: Montgomery County, Wednesdays

Takoma Voice **301-891-6744**
Distributed in Takoma Park and Silver Spring

The Montgomery County Journal..... **703-846-8485**
Distributed: Montgomery County, Sunday through Friday

The Montgomery/Prince Georges Counties Sentinel **301-306-9500**
Distributed: Montgomery County, Tuesdays

The Excalibur..... **301-650-1592**
Distributed: Montgomery College (Takoma Park) Monthly end of the month.

The Globe **301-353-7842**
Distributed: Montgomery College (Germantown) Mondays

- ♦ **Flyers and Brochures:** These can be distributed at real estate offices (realtors can distribute to clients who may be moving into your residential area and might have a need for childcare), stores, libraries, temples, colleges and churches, well-baby clinics, recreation centers, personnel offices (human resources) of large companies, local businesses, Laundromats, and beauty salons. Use pictures from the computer and internet. Create a name and a logo for your business.
- ♦ **Walk the Neighborhood:** Introduce yourself to families that you see have children and leave a flyer. Tell everyone you know that you are providing childcare. Remember to visit area playgrounds.
- ♦ **Business Cards:** Have cards made or make them yourself and *keep them with you are all times*. These can be distributed at public meetings, social events and dining out establishments. Don't forget to give them to the cashier when you check out at the grocery store, cleaners and drugstore, etc. ***Be creative!***

- ◆ **Contact Area Elementary Schools:** Let them know you are a child care provider in the area and let them know if you have openings ask if you can leave a flyer or cards for parents.
- ◆ **Join the PTA:** If you have children in school, get to know your administrators in your child's school. Leave information for parents who ask about child care.
- ◆ **A Magnetic Sign:** Consider a sign for your car, it can highlight your child care business. Shop around for the best price.
- ◆ **Referral Discounts:** Give clients a discount for referrals that is redeemable for 3-6 months or more.
- ◆ **Child Care Associations:** Providers are encouraged to join their local Family Child Care Association, it offers a great networking relationship among providers. Providers in general are usually helpful to one another. Check with your local Resource and Referral Center (R&R), for names and phone numbers of the local presidents.
- ◆ **Make Balloons:** You can have balloons made and also stickers and when you mail a bill you can advertise by mail (depending on where the mail is going)
- ◆ **Local Health Fairs:** If your town has a local health fair, get involved and advertise there.
- ◆ **Yellow Pages:** Consider placing an ad in the yellow pages. Consider combining with another provider to cut the cost.
- ◆ **Home Well Kept: Maintain** the outside of your home as well as the inside in order to attract parents.
- ◆ **T-Shirts:** You can have T-shirts made highlighting your business. Those could be very easy to make at home.
- ◆ **Open House:** weather permits, Saturday or Sunday a 2 or 3 hours open house, set up your program in a friendly way, do have registration forms available, post a daily schedule of activities. This will allow your neighbors to learn more about your program, and pass the word about it. Word of mouth is the most powerful and inexpensive tool to advertise your program.
Place a sign "License Child Care Open House" with arrows guiding potential clients to your program.

Consider these ideas. Some will work for you, and remember as a small business, **marketing is an important key element** – both with the parents who are already a part of your program and with those who could be in the future.

Bibliography:

"Family Child Care Marketing Guide", Tom Copeland, J.D.; Read Leaf Press 1999
 "Marketing Home-Based Child Care Work for You", Holly McDonough-Abunasser
 "Opening Your Doors to Children", Kathy Modigliani, NAEYC 1987

